conversion work. However, after conversion of the route, capacity is augmented and consequently earnings are expected to increase.

(d) Yes, Sir. However, delays may occur due to several reasons, many of which may be beyond the Railways' control.

Rail Tariff Regulatory Authority

3146. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Rail Tariff Regulatory Authority is proposed to be set up for following correct skewed pricing policy and adopt organisational changes for streamlining the passenger and cargo services;

(b) if so, by when the above proposal is likely to be implemented; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to set up a Rail Tariff Regulatory Authority at present.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Indigenous device to detect track fractures

3147. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item appearing in the Indian Express dated the 23rd February, 2001 to the effect that five engineers have successfully developed an indigenous device to help Railways to detect fractures in tracks, if so, Government's information in the matter;

(b) what is Government's reaction in the matter;

(c) what are the main features of the said development;

(d) whether the Railways would adopt this indigenous device;

(e) if so, when and how Government would adopt the same; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (f) Long Welded Rails can fracture in extreme cold conditions. To detect any such fracture, Railways carry out patrolling of track in the early hours of morning. To assist patrolmen in detecting such fractures in the dark period of early morning a prototype of the device has been developed on Central Railway. The device works on 6 V rechargeable battery and uses the principle of continuity of electric circuit. When the device moves across a fracture the discontinuity sets off a buzzer alarm. The device is supposed to be an assistance to the patrolman, who at present relies on the visual inspection. The device has a weight of about 14 kg and costs approx. Rs. 3500/-. The device is still under developmental stage and its adoption will be considered after the trials are found to be successful and its utilization fruitful.

Kalka—Parwanoo Railway section

3148. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work on Kalka—Parwanoo section had been approved during 1997-98;

(b) if so, the details thereof, with progress made and the amount spent so far; and

(c) by when the work on the project is to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. However, the work was to be taken up after obtaining necessary clearances. The requisite clearance has been received only on 23.01.1999.

(b) The length of the line is 5.35 Kms. and anticipated cost is Rs. 23 crores. The final location survey has been completed. Land acquisition papers have been submitted to State Govt. Amount spent/ likely to be spent by 31.3.2001 is Rs. 12.87 lakhs.

(c) No target date has yet been fixed for completion of this project.